

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A water-cooled vertical engine comprising:
  - a crankshaft disposed substantially vertically;
  - a connecting rod;
  - a piston connected via the connecting rod to the crankshaft;
  - a cylinder housing the piston in a reciprocating manner;
  - a cylinder block including the cylinder;
  - a cylinder head connected to the cylinder block;
  - a combustion chamber formed by the cylinder head in cooperation with the cylinder and the piston;
  - a cylinder block cooling water jacket formed in the cylinder block;
  - a cylinder head cooling water jacket formed in the cylinder head; and
  - a cooling water pump for supplying cooling water to the two water jackets;wherein the cylinder block cooling water jacket and the cylinder head cooling water jacket are substantially independent of each other, and a pair of left and right cooling water passages branching from a cooling water passage for supplying cooling water from the cooling water pump to the cylinder block cooling water jacket are is made to communicate with the cylinder head cooling water jacket via gasket faces of the cylinder block and the cylinder head.
  
2. (Currently Amended) The water-cooled vertical engine according to Claim 1 wherein ~~a branching part of the cooling water passages~~ the cooling water passage for supplying cooling water from the cooling water pump to the cylinder block cooling water jacket is formed within a lower part of the cylinder block.

3. (Original) The water-cooled vertical engine according to Claim 1 wherein an oil return passage for returning oil from the cylinder head to an oil pan via the cylinder block runs through the gasket faces of the cylinder block and the cylinder head between the pair of left and right cooling water passages.

4. (Currently Amended) An outboard motor equipped with a water-cooled vertical engine according to Claim 1 wherein ~~a branching part of the cooling water passages~~ the cooling water passage for supplying cooling water from the cooling water pump to the cylinder block cooling water jacket is formed within a support frame supporting a lower face of ~~[[an]]~~ the engine.

5. (Currently Amended) An outboard motor equipped with a water-cooled vertical engine according to Claim 1 wherein ~~a branching part of the cooling water passages~~ the cooling water passage for supplying cooling water from the cooling water pump to the cylinder block cooling water jacket is formed in mating surfaces of the cylinder block and a support frame supporting ~~[[the]]~~ a lower face of the engine.

6. (New) The water-cooled vertical engine according to Claim 1 wherein further cooling water passages extend from said cylinder block cooling water jacket and said cylinder head cooling water jacket, respectively, to a third cooling water jacket, and first and second thermostats are provided in said further cooling water passages, respectively.